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MONTGOMERY COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION

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SCOTT FRANCE, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

May 15, 2024

Mr. Joseph Czajkowski, Manager
Lower Salford Township
379 Main Street
Harleysville, Pennsylvania 19438-2391

Re: MCPC # 22-0001-003
Plan Name: 488 Harleysville Pike
(26 dwelling units on 1 lot comprising approximately 9.15 acres)
Situate: 488 Harleysville Pike (cross street: Meetinghouse Road)
Lower Salford Township

Dear Mr. Czajkowski:

We have reviewed the above-referenced subdivision and land development plan in accordance with Section 502 of Act 247, "The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code," as you requested on April 23, 2024. We forward this letter as a report of our review.

BACKGROUND

The applicant, Orleans Conservatory Group Partners L.P., has submitted a sketch plan for a 26-unit residential development consisting of a mix of three- and four-unit (triplex and quadruplex) attached units, and townhouse units. The proposed development would have vehicular access from Harleysville Pike (Private Road A), as well as emergency access on Harleysville Pike. Proposed Private Road A would branch into two cul-de-sac streets that would create a cluster-style of development closer to the frontage of the property along Harleysville Pike, while maintaining a portion of the natural features on the property. Additional parallel parking spaces would be provided along the Private Road A.

The proposal includes common open spaces and two stormwater management facilities. The proposed common open space consists of a path and an area at the rear of the property along the wetlands and floodplain. In addition, there is an "Active Recreational Area" along the property line on the other side of the floodplain.

The property currently contains mature trees, a watercourse, and a wetland, as well as an existing dwelling and accessory structures that would be demolished. The property is located in the R-4 Medium High Density Mixed Dwelling District and is served by public water and sewer. We reviewed previously submitted proposals for this site in letters dated January 21, 2022 and December 7, 2023.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMPLIANCE

A. *MONTCO 2040* – The proposed subdivision and land development is generally consistent with the county's comprehensive plan*, MONTCO 2040: A Shared Vision*, which designates the area as a *Suburban Residential Area*, a Designated Growth Potential Area. Suburban Residential Areas are residential areas that depend on automobiles for transportation and often have extensive landscaping on individual properties.

B. Indian Valley Regional Comprehensive Plan – The proposed subdivision is generally consistent with the Indian Valley Regional Comprehensive Plan, as the area affected by the development is located in the Future Land Use map's Designated Growth area. The development aligns with the Regional Comprehensive Plan's initiative to ensure that future growth of greater densities is concentrated in designated areas.

RECOMMENDATION

The Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) generally supports the applicant's proposal, however, in the course of our review we have identified the following issues that the applicant and township may wish to consider prior to final plan approval. Our comments are as follows:

REVIEW COMMENTS

NATURAL FEATURES

We commend the applicant for proposing a site plan layout that would reduce the impact on the natural features of the area. The development is concentrated closer to the front of the property along Harleysville Pike, and appears to limit the disturbance of the watercourse.

The property contains the headwaters for Bullfrog Creek. Headwater streams are particularly sensitive to disruption, and their loss affects water quality and habitat conditions in the downstream watershed. As indicated on the submitted Soil Map, the soils along the stream are Bowmansville, which have very hydric conditions that support wetland habitats and vegetation. We recommend the applicant consider how to maintain the stream corridor. We suggest planting trees to shade the stream and wetlands, revegetating the corridor with other suitable plants, and designating a "no mow" zone along the stream corridor.

STORMWTAER MANAGEMENT

The proposal includes two stormwater management facilities. As stated in our previous review letter, we recommend that the applicant consider using the stormwater management facility to create a naturalized meadow-like habitat that can be an amenity for the residents. A naturalized basin would have to meet the requirements of the subdivision and land development ordinance (SALDO) Section 142-42.F(2)(d). In order to create a naturalized basin, we suggest the stormwater facilities be larger and shallower with gently sloping sides that adhere to the topography of the area. For example, Stormwater Facility #1 is located between units 18 and 19 and the Active Recreational Area and trail, and could function as a natural meadow that feeds into the wetland and stream riparian corridor.

TRAIL

A 5-foot wide asphalt trail is proposed to connect to the cul-de-sac at the end of Private Road A and appears to stop at the proposed Active Recreational Area that makes up a part of the 1.4 acres of Common Open Space. We recommend that the trail extend through the active Recreational Area and Common Open Space along the property line, and with sufficient buffering from the stream riparian corridor, to the rear of the property.

There is an existing trail on an abutting property which connects to Alderfer Park. We understand that if the applicant constructs the trail along the entire length of the property line, there would be a gap between the trail and the existing trail, which could eventually be bridged to connect into the wider township trail system. We encourage the applicant to construct a trail along the length of their property line and to coordinate with the township on how a potential connection to the existing trail could be made. In addition, the SALDO requires that shared-use paths shall be at least eight feet wide (Section 142-41.C(10)).

TRANSPORTATION

We wish to reiterate the following transportation-related comments from our previous review letters.

A. Residential Street Width. The applicant is proposing a cartway width of 30 feet for proposed private rods. The township's Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance states that residential streets "function primarily to provide vehicular access and street frontage" for the residences and have a required minimum travel lane width of 10 feet (§ 142-29.D(1)). As a residential street, "there is little need for mobility or high operating speeds" (§ 142-29.D). In order to reduce vehicle travel speeds and calm traffic, we recommend that the applicant reduce the lane width and cartway width. Reducing the cartway width could have the added benefit of reducing impervious coverage.

B. Coordination with PennDOT. The property is located on and has two vehicular access driveways from Harleysville Pike, which is state road Route 113. Due to the proposal's location, we recommend coordinating with PennDOT as part of the Highway Occupancy Permit (HOP) process.

TOWNHOUSE DESIGN

A. Street Trees. We wish to reiterate the following townhouse design comments from our previous review letter. Based on the plan provided, it appears that each of the proposed units would have a two-car garage and double-wide driveways. Double-wide driveways often take up most of the available space in the front yard, limiting landscaping and street trees. There appears to be space between driveways that would allow for a tree in front of each unit. We suggest that before proceeding to engineering, the applicant plan ahead for the placement of utilities in order to ensure that there is sufficient space to include trees without conflicts with utilities. For best practices on townhouse design, we suggest referencing the MCPC guidebook Building Better Townhouse Communities.

B. Buffer. The backyards of the townhouse units face Harleysville Pike. In order to buffer the townhouse units from the road (as required per § 142-24.G.), the front setback could be planted with a naturalized buffer to mimic the natural landscape of the area (§ 142-24.G(4)(f)).

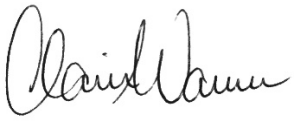
CONCLUSION

We wish to reiterate that MCPC generally supports the applicant's proposal but we believe that our suggested revisions will better achieve Lower Salford's planning objectives for residential development.

Please note that the review comments and recommendations contained in this report are advisory to the municipality and final disposition for the approval of any proposal will be made by the municipality.

Should the governing body approve a final plat of this proposal, the applicant must present the plan to our office for seal and signature prior to recording with the Recorder of Deeds office. A paper copy bearing the municipal seal and signature of approval must be supplied for our files. Please print the assigned MCPC number (22-0001-003) on any plans submitted for final recording.

Sincerely,



Claire Warner, Senior Community Planner
Claire.Warner@montgomerycountypa.gov – 610-278-3755

c: Orleans Conservatory Group Partners LP, Applicant
ARNA Engineering, Inc., Applicant's Engineer
Manus McHugh, Chair, Township Planning Commission
Michael Beuke, Director of Building and Zoning
Andrew Freimuth, Township Solicitor
Michelle Fountain, P.E., Township Engineer
John Evarts, P.E., Township Engineer
Keith Bergman, Chair, Township Board of Supervisors
Patti Reimel, Codes Administrative Assistant
Holly Hosterman, Assistant to the Township Manager
Stephanie Butler, P.E., Township Traffic Engineer
Scott Burton, PennDOT
Paul Lutz, PennDOT
Fran Hanney, P.E., PennDOT

Attachment A: Aerial Image of Site
Attachment B: Reduced Copy of Applicant's Proposed Site Plan

ATTACHMENTS A & B

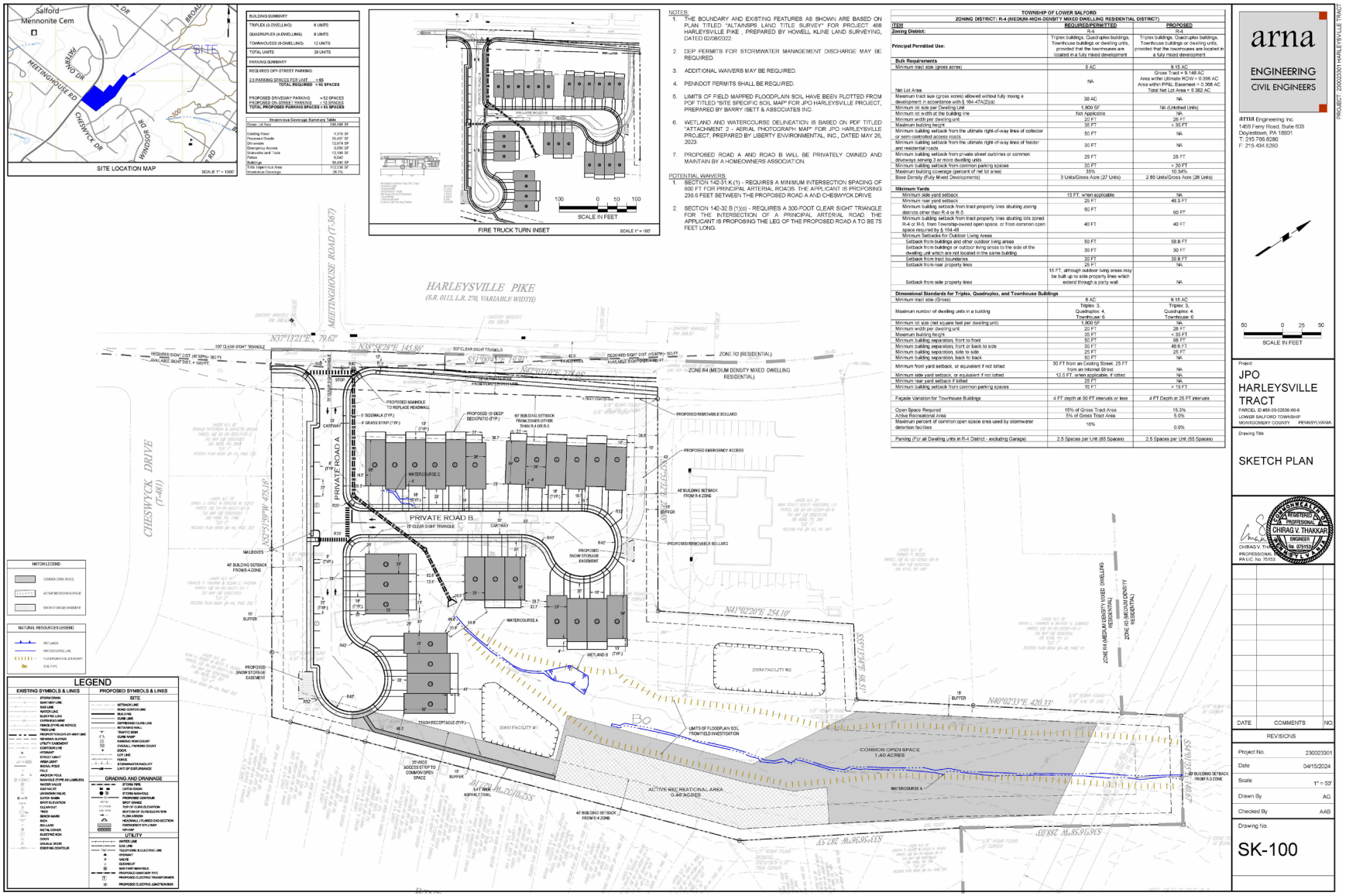


JPO Harleysville Tract
MCPC#220001003

Montgomery County Planning Commission

0 100 200 400 Feet

N



BUILDING SUMMARY	
TRIPLEX (3-DWELLING)	6 UNITS
QUADRUPLEX (4-DWELLING)	8 UNITS
TOWNHOUSES (6-DWELLING)	12 UNITS
TOTAL UNITS	26 UNITS

PARKING SUMMARY

REQUIRED OFF-STREET PARKING:
2.5 PARKING SPACES PER UNIT = 65
TOTAL REQUIRED = 65 SPACES

PROPOSED DRIVEWAY PARKING = 52 SPACES
PROPOSED ON-STREET PARKING = 13 SPACES
TOTAL PROPOSED PARKING SPACES = 65 SPACES

Impervious Coverage Summary Table	
Gross Lot Area	198,496 SF
Existing Road	6,578 SF
Proposed Roads	39,457 SF
Driveways	12,674 SF
Emergency Access	3,050 SF
Sidewalks and Curb	10,186 SF
Patios	6,040
Buildings	35,482 SF
Total Impervious Area	113,538 SF
Impervious Coverage	39.3%

NOTES:
1. THE BOUNDARY AND EXISTING FEATURES AS SHOWN ARE BASED ON PLAN TITLED "ALTA/NSPS LAND TITLE SURVEY" FOR PROJECT: 498 HARLEYSVILLE PIKE , PREPARED BY HOWELL KLINE LAND SURVEYING, DATED 02/08/2022.
2. DEP PERMITS FOR STORMWATER MANAGEMENT DISCHARGE MAY BE REQUIRED.
3. ADDITIONAL WAIVERS MAY BE REQUIRED.
4. PENNDOT PERMITS SHALL BE REQUIRED.
5. LIMITS OF FIELD MAPPED FLOODPLAIN SOIL HAVE BEEN PLOTTED FROM PDF TITLED "SITE SPECIFIC SOIL MAP" FOR JPO HARLEYSVILLE PROJECT, PREPARED BY BARRY ISETT & ASSOCIATES INC.
6. WETLAND AND WATERCOURSE DELINEATION IS BASED ON PDF TITLED "ATTACHMENT 2 - AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH MAP" FOR JPO HARLEYSVILLE PROJECT, PREPARED BY LIBERTY ENVIRONMENTAL, INC., DATED MAY 26, 2023.
7. PROPOSED ROAD A AND ROAD B WILL BE PRIVATELY OWNED AND MAINTAIN BY A HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION.

POTENTIAL WAIVERS:
1. SECTION 142-31.K.(1) - REQUIRES A MINIMUM INTERSECTION SPACING OF 800 FT FOR PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL ROADS. THE APPLICANT IS PROPOSING 236.0 FEET BETWEEN THE PROPOSED ROAD A AND CHESWYCK DRIVE.
2. SECTION 142-32.B.(1)(c) - REQUIRES A 300-FOOT CLEAR SIGHT TRIANGLE FOR THE INTERSECTION OF A PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL ROAD. THE APPLICANT IS PROPOSING THE LEG OF THE PROPOSED ROAD A TO BE 75 FEET LONG.

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER SALFORD
ZONING DISTRICT: R-4 (MEDIUM-HIGH-DENSITY MIXED DWELLING RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT)

ITEM	REQUIRED/PERMITTED	PROPOSED
Zoning District:	R-4	R-4
Principal Permitted Use:	Triplex buildings, Quadruplex buildings, Townhouse buildings or dwelling units, provided that the townhouses are located in a fully mixed development	Triplex buildings, Quadruplex buildings, Townhouse buildings or dwelling units, provided that the townhouses are located in a fully mixed development
Bulk Requirements		
Minimum tract size (gross acres)	8 AC	9.15 AC Gross Tract = 9.148 AC Area within Ultimate ROW = 0.396 AC Area within PPAL Easement = 0.368 AC Total Net Lot Area = 8.382 AC
Net Lot Area	NA	NA
Maximum tract size (gross acres) allowed without fully mixing a development in accordance with § 164-47A(2)(a)	30 AC	NA
Minimum lot size per Dwelling Unit	1,800 SF	NA (Unlotted Units)
Minimum lot width at the building line	Not Applicable	NA
Minimum width per dwelling unit	20 FT	26 FT
Maximum building height	35 FT	< 35 FT
Minimum building setback from the ultimate right-of-way lines of collector or semi-controlled access roads	50 FT	NA
Minimum building setback from the ultimate right-of-way lines of feeder and residential roads	30 FT	NA
Minimum building setback from private street curblines or common driveways serving 3 or more dwelling units	25 FT	25 FT
Minimum building setback from common parking spaces	20 FT	> 20 FT
Maximum building coverage (percent of net lot area)	35%	10.54%
Base Density (Fully Mixed Developments)	3 Units/Gross Acre (27 Units)	2.85 Units/Gross Acre (26 Units)
Minimum Yards		
Minimum side yard setback	15 FT, when applicable	NA
Minimum rear yard setback	25 FT	48.3 FT
Minimum building setback from tract property lines abutting zoning districts other than R-4 or R-5	60 FT	60 FT
Minimum building setback from tract property lines abutting lots zoned R-4 or R-5, from Township-owned open space, or from common open space required by § 164-48	40 FT	40 FT
Minimum Setbacks for Outdoor Living Areas		
Setback from buildings and other outdoor living areas	50 FT	58.8 FT
Setback from buildings or outdoor living areas to the side of the dwelling unit which are not located in the same building	30 FT	30 FT
Setback from tract boundaries	30 FT	30.8 FT
Setback from rear property lines	25 FT	NA
Setback from side property lines	15 FT, although outdoor living areas may be built up to side property lines which extend through a party wall	NA
Dimensional Standards for Triplex, Quadruplex, and Townhouse Buildings		
Minimum tract size (Gross)	8 AC	9.15 AC
Maximum number of dwelling units in a building	Triplex: 3, Quadruplex: 4, Townhouse: 6	Triplex: 3, Quadruplex: 4, Townhouse: 6
Minimum lot size (net square feet per dwelling unit)	1,800 SF	NA
Minimum width per dwelling unit	20 FT	26 FT
Maximum building height	35 FT	< 35 FT
Minimum building separation, front to front	50 FT	58 FT
Minimum building separation, front or back to side	30 FT	48.8 FT
Minimum building separation, side to side	25 FT	25 FT
Minimum building separation, back to back	50 FT	NA
Minimum front yard setback, or equivalent if not lotted	30 FT from an Existing Street, 25 FT from an Internal Street	NA
Minimum side yard setback, or equivalent if not lotted	12.5 FT, when applicable, if lotted	NA
Minimum rear yard setback if lotted	25 FT	NA
Minimum building setback from common parking spaces	15 FT	> 15 FT
Façade Variation for Townhouse Buildings	4 FT depth at 50 FT intervals or less	4 FT Depth at 26 FT intervals
Open Space Required	15% of Gross Tract Area	15.3%
Active Recreational Area	5% of Gross Tract Area	5.0%
Maximum percent of common open space area used by stormwater detention facilities	10%	0.0%
Parking (For all Dwelling units in R-4 District - excluding Garage)	2.5 Spaces per Unit (65 Spaces)	2.5 Spaces per Unit (65 Spaces)

arna
ENGINEERING
CIVIL ENGINEERS
arna Engineering, Inc.
1465 Ferry Road, Suite 603
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T: 215.766.8280
F: 215.434.5280

PROJECT: 230023301 HARLEYSVILLE TRACT

50 0 25 50
SCALE IN FEET

Project
JPO HARLEYSVILLE TRACT
PARCEL ID #50-00-02536-00-6
LOWER SALFORD TOWNSHIP
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PENNSYLVANIA

Drawing Title
SKETCH PLAN

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL CHIRAG V. THAKKAR ENGINEER No. 075153

CHIRAG V. THAKKAR, P.E.
PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER
PA LIC. No. 75153

DATE	COMMENTS	NO.

REVISIONS

Project No.	230023301
Date	04/15/2024
Scale	1" = 50'
Drawn By	AG
Checked By	AAB

Drawing No.
SK-100

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